

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Congressman Rob Wittman (VA-1) joined colleagues today to announce the introduction of three separate bills to expand offshore energy production in order to create jobs, lower energy costs, generate revenue to help pay down the national debt, and improve national security by lessening our dependence on foreign energy.

“This is part one in a multi-step, all-of-the-above energy plan,” Wittman said. “Our economy continues to struggle to regain its footing as unemployment hovers at 9%. Unrest in the Middle East and North Africa threatens our energy security. Virginians are noticing higher gas prices at the pumps and feel the pinch in their wallets. Virginia has the opportunity to develop offshore energy in an environmentally friendly manner, but unfortunately, that’s been halted by current policies prohibiting further oil and gas development. Virginia can lead the nation in improving our energy security and reduce our reliance on foreign oil. Further, we must work to promote wind, solar and other renewable energy sources. Failure to promptly address our energy needs could negatively impact the U.S economic recovery and national security. I am proud to join in this first important step that directly impacts energy supplies and the economy of the Commonwealth.”

As part of the [American Energy Initiative](#) , the legislation introduced today included (click links for more information):

- The [Restarting American Offshore Leasing Now Act](#) would require the Obama Administration to move forward promptly to conduct offshore lease sales in the Gulf of Mexico and offshore Virginia that the Obama Administration has delayed or canceled. Due to the Obama Administration’s actions, in 2011 there will be no offshore lease sales – the first time since 1958.
- The [Putting the Gulf Back to Work Act](#) would end the Obama Administration’s *de facto* moratorium in the Gulf of Mexico in a safe, responsible, transparent manner by setting firm time-lines for considering permits to drill, which provide certainty and allow employers and workers to get back on the job.
- The [Reversing President Obama’s Offshore Moratorium Act](#) would lift the President’s ban on new offshore drilling by requiring the Administration to move forward in the 2012-2017 lease plan with energy production in areas containing the most oil and natural gas resources.